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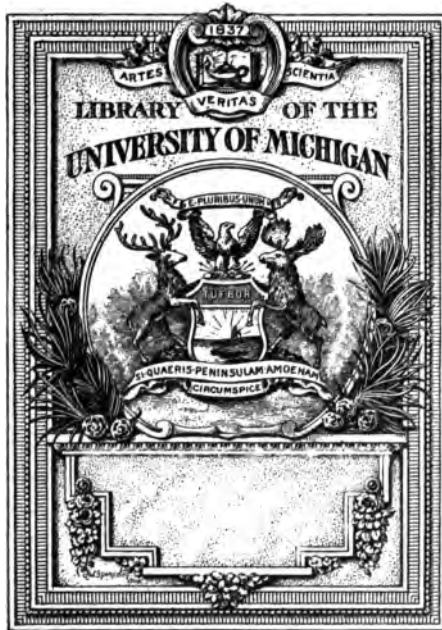
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**LOVE'S LOOKING GLASS**





# LOVE'S LOOKING GLASS

425-74

A VOLUME OF POEMS



LONDON  
PERCIVAL AND CO.

1891

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at

Ἔρωτ' γὰρ ἀργὸν κἀπὶ τοῖς ἀργοῖς ἔφυ'  
φιλεῖ κάτοπτρα.

EURIP. *Danaë*, frag. 8.

Praeter vero superiores campanulas et alia quaedam humilis et parva est, cui caules tenelli, in alas plures divisi, plurima parte humi decumbentes; folia parva; flores parvuli, tintinnabulis aut campanulis similes; radices tenuissimae sunt. Facultatem compertam nullam habet, cum nullius in medicina sit usus. Anonymos nostris est herba; plerique tamen Speculum Amoris vocant.

R. DODONAEI *Stirpium Historiae*  
*Pemptadis Secundae* lib. I. cap. xi

*Of the poems in this volume, those marked B in the Table of Contents are by H. C. Beeching, those marked A by J. W. Mackail, and those marked N by J. B. B. Nichols. Some of them have been already published in a volume by the same authors called Love in Idleness (1883), which is now out of print; some others have appeared in the Oxford Magazine; the rest are now printed for the first time. The design on the title-page is adapted from the Hypnerotomachia.*

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## A DEDICATION

O SWEETEST face of all the faces  
About my way,  
A light for night and lonely places,  
A day in day ;

If you will touch and take and pardon  
What I can give,  
Take this, a flower, into your garden,  
And bid it live.

It is not worth your love or praises  
For aught its own ;  
Yet Proserpine would smile on daisies  
Sicilian-grown ;

And so beneath your smile a minute  
May this rest too,  
Although the only virtue in it  
Be love of you.

## A SUMMER DAY

GREEN leaves panting for joy with the great wind  
rushing through ;  
A burst of the sun from cloud and a sparkle on  
valley and hill,  
Gold on the corn, and red on the poppy, and on  
the rill  
Silver, and over all white clouds afloat in the blue.

Swallows that dart, a lark unseen, innumerable song  
Chirruped and twittered, a lowing of cows in the  
meadow grass,  
Murmuring gnats, and bees that suck their honey  
and pass :  
God is alive, and at work in the world :—we did it  
wrong.

Human eyes, and human hands, and a human face  
Darkly beheld before in a vision, not understood,  
Do I at last begin to feel as I stand and gaze  
Why God waited for this, then called the world  
very good ?

FROM THE PERSIAN

WERE I despised and desolate and poor,  
Mocked of my foes, forsaken of my kin,  
If I should cry for pity at thy door,  
O love, I wonder wouldst thou let me in ?

Ah, but if pain or sorrow or disgrace  
Came to thee, which God grant shall never be,  
Sleepless to serve thee and to see thy face  
To my life's end were bliss enough for me.

## AUBADE

(FOR C. H. S., SEPTEMBER 1882)

AWAKE ! for day afar  
Behind the morning star  
Climbing, has flooded down on hill and lawn.  
In the pure western distance, range by range,  
The purple mountain ridges counterchange  
Shadow and gleam beneath the skirts of dawn.  
Mist-veiled, the wood and rill,  
The harvest field with autumn dew impearled,  
The long white village clinging on the hill,  
Shine in the light that lightens all the world.

Awake ! for ere to-night  
Have hid to-day's delight,  
Or darkness stopped the busy harvesters,  
Hymen must here hold revel for a space,  
And bridal chants fill all the echoing place.  
With flute and viol, and not without a verse,  
Must one go forth to-day  
To meet the welcome of her marriage morn,  
Must one arise and take her southern way,  
And leave the pastoral valley half-forlorn.

Hail and fair speed prolong  
To him and her, O song !  
Who meet this day no more on earth to part.  
Long life and happiness and golden ease,  
Sweet songs and soft confederate silences,  
And children's laughter satisfy their heart.  
Be this September morn,  
Fragrant and festal in its white array,  
The first of many and many yet unborn  
More and much more abundant than to-day.

And though she leave us thus,  
How often back to us  
Shall she again with matron footstep come,  
To teach her children each memorial spot,  
And keep her maiden memory unforgot,  
Unlost the earlier in the newer home!  
Often by holm and glen  
She shall retrace the wingèd seasons' flight ;  
Often shall watch the silver-swirling Ken  
Laugh to the sun or glimmer in the night.

So, with long years and sweet  
Stretched out before their feet,  
May they the lengthening slopes of life ascend ;  
Find shade and shelter and cool waters' flow  
When the sun burns ; and when the sun draws low,  
Sweet sleep and grassy quiet in the end,



Here, where no lovelier ground  
Stands open to the mute perpetual sky ;  
The eternal mountains watching all around,  
The pastoral river always rippling by.

Or, if this life of ours,  
With light and shade and showers,  
Be but the dream that we must rise and break ;  
If he at last, that shadowy form, if he  
Who keeps the gate of immortality,  
Come as the Morning Star to bid us wake,  
What can our love yet pray  
For those we love, what better, fairer thing,  
Than a long gracious night before the day,  
Good dreams and sweet, and soft awakening ?

Ah, and to me it seems  
That even these earthly dreams  
May forge a chain that shall outlast the night :  
That loved and lover for the old love's sake  
Will turn to one another when they wake,  
With all the known and with a new delight ;  
To find that flower full-blown  
Whose bud and promise cheered their mortal  
state ;  
To dwell for ever in that House unknown,  
Soul grown with soul one and inseparate.

AUBADE

7

Awake, O dreamer ! nay  
With no dim thoughts astray  
Darken this day of joy and clear delight ;  
Let happy tears and laughter fill it all,  
And sunshine, till it find at evenfall  
Splendour and consecration of the night.  
Pass thou, my song, and die.  
And if one ask thee, ere thy breath expire,  
'What art thou?' then make answer :  
'Nothing I :  
But God send every one their heart's desire.'

TO F. A. S.

1887

FAST-YELLOWING phantom birches shake ;  
In dreams I hear the Ken ;  
On those dear hills might musing break  
To music once again !

But here, past cliff and down, expands  
The Channel winged with ships':  
And, turning as to foreign lands,  
I speak from alien lips.

So fast the circling seasons fleet,  
Five years are come and gone,  
Since on another bride the sweet  
September sunlight shone.

Yet now, from places far away,  
Once more I fain would send  
One word to greet the marriage day  
Of no less dear a friend.

## PYRAMUS

ON one side was a garden, and on one  
An olive-grove ; the wall was high and wide ;  
On one side she was singing in the sun,  
And in the shadow on the other side  
Revoltfully he was constrained to hide,  
Beating his brains and comfort finding none,  
Because the witless wall must still divide  
Passion from undivined compassion.

Till on his side he took his lyre to sing  
He scarce knew what, some song of days gone by,  
Of winter's flight and the return of spring,  
How brief love's season is, how soon we die ;  
And softly, as his fingers left the string,  
Upon the other side he heard her sigh.

## TRANSCENDENTALISM

Am you above me, not  
    Mine, up in air !  
Love me or love me not,  
    Why should I care ?  
Sweet, while the sight of you  
Gives me delight of you,  
Let me be quite forgot,  
Love me or love me not,  
Turn snow or stone to me,  
    That's your affair ;  
Once you were known to me,  
    Why should I care ?

## IMPRESSION

LET us not call it love ;  
Nothing to come or past  
Sweeter, no heaven forecast  
Heavenlier above,  
If it could only last.

Could it but last, to breathe  
This April-tempered air,  
Ever to meet you there,  
Virginal brows, and wreath  
Leaves for your unbound hair.

Love could not give or get  
Hours like these silver-pure  
Hours that may not endure ;  
Dear, let us love not yet,  
Nay, though the end be sure.

## AMORET

### I

Love found you still a child,  
Who looked on him and smiled  
Scornful with laughter mild  
    And knew him not :  
Love turned and looked on you,  
Love looked and he smiled too,  
And all at once you knew  
    You knew not what.

### II

Love laughed again, and said,  
Smiling, ' Be not afraid :  
Though lord of all things made,  
    I do no wrong :  
Like you I love all flowers,  
All dusky twilight hours,  
Spring sunshine and spring showers,  
    Like you am young.'

## III

Love looked into your eyes,  
Your clear cold idle eyes,  
Said, 'These shall be my prize,  
    Their light my light :  
These tender lips that move  
With laughter soft as love  
Shall tremble still and prove  
    Love's very might.'

## IV

Love took you by the hand  
At eve, and bade you stand  
At edge of the woodland,  
    Where I should pass ;  
Love sent me thither, sweet,  
And brought me to your feet ;  
He willed that we should meet,  
    And so it was.



MORNING MUSIC

(FOR A PICTURE)

IN morning meadows even so  
Piped the boy shepherd long ago,  
Where sunlit on a grassy dell  
The orchard-blossom flushed and fell,  
And cool in shadow ran the sweet  
Sicilian water at his feet.

MOUNTAIN ECHO

(FOR A STATUE)

IN some Arcadian valley deep withdrawn  
The shepherd to the shepherd called at dawn ;  
Clear rang his cry ; the music that it had  
High on the hill awoke the Oread,  
And she her sister, and afar on high  
The silver echoes made divine reply,  
While he, exultant, hung half-startled thus,  
And heard Cyllene answer Maenalus.

TO COMATAS

*τὸ δ' ὑπὸ δρυσὶν ἢ ὑπὸ πέυκαις  
ἀδὸ μελισσόμενος κατακέκλιτο, θεῖε Κομάτα.*

HERE on this garden's close-cut grass,  
Where here and there a leaf astray  
Lies yellow, till the wind shall pass  
And take it some new earthy way,  
Here, O Comatas, let us lie  
While yet the autumn sun is high.

The stir of men is quiet now,  
But birds are singing each to each ;  
The robin on the apple bough  
Sings to the robin in the beech,  
And swallows twitter as they go  
Wheeling and sweeping high and low.

No sound but these sweet madrigals  
To our enclosed garden comes,  
Save when a ripened apple falls,  
Or gnats intone, or a wasp hums.  
Here shall thy voice bid time speed by,  
O boy Comatas, as we lie.

Sing some old rhyme of long ago,  
Of lady-love or wandering knight,  
Of faithful friend and valorous foe,  
And right not yet estranged from might.  
The songs our singers sing us now,  
O boy Comatas, sing not thou.

Sing, for thy voice has gentle power  
To cancel years of fret and woe,  
And I, remembering this one hour,  
Shall pass sad days the happier so,  
And thou, before the sun has set,  
O boy Comatas, wilt forget.

## SPRING IN WINTER

SICK and sullen and sad the slow days go ;  
Fog creeps over the land, and frost and snow  
Grip on the springs of joy, and stop their flow.

Yet at thy voice, beloved, the ice to-day  
Felt the ardours of Spring, and fell away,  
Bubbled again and sang with the joy of May.

## THE PASSING OF THE YEAR

WHEN the breath of March was keen  
And the woods were brown and bare,  
Covered from the cruel air  
In a tangled bed of green  
Violets grew unplucked, unseen,  
Sweet and meet to wreath your hair,  
If it only could have been.

But Love's heart and hope were strong  
As he smiled and whispered low :  
When the summer roses blow,  
When the summer swallows throng,  
Though a little while be long,  
She will come at last to know,  
She will take our flowers and song.

Now encroaching sunset shows  
That the year hath turned his face  
Unto failure and disgrace,  
Brooding mists and beating snows,  
While along the garden-rows  
Leaf and petal fall apace,  
And with each a poor hope goes.

## THE SWALLOW SONG

(FROM ATHENAEUS VIII. 360 B)

*Sung by Greek boys from door to door  
when the first swallow came oversea.*

COME, come is the swallow,  
With fair spring to follow.  
She and the fair weather  
Are come along together.  
White is her breast,  
And black all the rest.

Roll us a cake  
Out of the door  
From your rich store  
For the swallow's sake,—  
And wine in a flasket  
And cheese in a basket  
And wheat-bread and rye,  
These the swallow will not put by.

Will you give us or shall we go?  
If you will, why rest you so ;

THE SWALLOW SONG

21

But and if you shall say us nay,  
Then we will carry the door away,  
Or the lintel above it, or, easiest of all,  
Your wife within, for she is but small.  
Give us our need  
And take God-speed.  
Open door to the swallow then,  
For we are children and not old men.



THE GOLDEN BOOK  
OF CUPID AND PSYCHE

‘ONCE in a city of old  
Lived a king and a queen ;  
These had three fair daughters,  
But the fairest of all was the third—’

How, in the ages of gold,  
Where summer meadows were green,  
By welling of pastoral waters  
Did the story begin to be heard ?

Surely the world was good,  
And life and passion and speech  
Still seemed to sparkle and quiver  
In sunlit dew of the morn ;

And the wood-nymphs danced through the wood,  
And the sea-wind sang to the beach,  
And the wise reeds talked in the river,  
When this tale came to be born.

No ! in an age like ours,  
Dull, philanthropic, effete,  
From the dust of a world grown stupid  
And a language deep in decay,

Sudden, with scent as of flowers,  
With song as of birds, the sweet  
Story of Psyche and Cupid  
Strangely sprang into day.

Seventeen centuries more  
Have given their sands to the sum  
Of kings and queens passed over  
And cities of long ago ;

But still to our ears as of yore  
The musical soft words come,  
Whose magic the earliest lover  
Knew, and the last will know.

## AN ETRUSCAN RING

I

**WHERE**, girt with orchard and with oliveyard,  
The white hill-fortress glimmers on the hill,  
Day after day an ancient goldsmith's skill  
Guided the copper graver, tempered hard  
By some lost secret, while he shaped the sard  
Slowly to beauty, and his tiny drill,  
Edged with corundum, ground its way until  
The gem lay perfect for the ring to guard.

Then seeing the stone complete to his desire,  
With mystic imagery carven thus,  
And dark Egyptian symbols fabulous,  
He drew through it the delicate golden wire,  
And bent the fastening; and the Etrurian sun  
Sank behind Ilva, and the work was done.

## II

What dark-haired daughter of a Lucumo  
Bore on her slim white finger to the grave  
This the first gift her Tyrrhene lover gave,  
Those five-and-twenty centuries ago?  
What shadowy dreams might haunt it, lying low  
So long, while kings and armies, wave on wave,  
Above the rock-tomb's buried architrave  
Went million-footed trampling to and fro?

Who knows? but well it is so frail a thing,  
Unharm'd by conquering Time's supremacy,  
Still should be fair, though scarce less old than  
Rome.

Now once again at rest from wandering  
Across the high Alps and the dreadful sea,  
In utmost England let it find a home.

## NAUSICAA

By this they have the island well in sight,  
Its faint fields gleaming through the mist ; all night  
    Have they swept on, the dark wave off the stem  
Gurgling ; and now the morning star is bright.

Only four days ago with cart and mules  
We drove to where the running water cools  
    The round white pebbles, slipping over them,  
In the bright meadow-bordered river pools.

There came he on us from the forest dim,  
Sea-worn, but like a god in face and limb ;  
    Even a king's daughter, wonderful and fair,  
Might lose her heart unblamed to one like him.

O splendour of the sunset as we went  
Past the ploughed fields to where the poplars bent  
    About Athene's spring that, rising there,  
Down the King's Meadow its white water sent !

And there I left him, and drove on apace  
Between the shipyards, through the market-place,  
    While all the air seemed sweet and musical,  
For next day I should see him face to face,

And the day after, and for ever thus ;  
For he would stay here and be one of us,  
    Dwelling at ease within our palace hall  
Clad in soft raiment, great and glorious.

Ah me, the ways untrod, the words unsaid !  
The tender memories unrememberèd !  
    The dreadful presence of what might have been,  
And life eternal of things done and dead !

One word of parting was to serve for all,  
One last short word, when to the festival  
    He came at evening, his face flushed and keen  
With thoughts of home ; and high along the hall

The great gold statues held their torches red.  
I spoke, with loud seas swirling in my head,  
    *Farewell : remember that to me this day*  
*Thou owest thy life's ransom.* Then he said

Some words in answer : his voice sounded dim,  
Far off : the silver pillars seemed to swim  
    Before me ; and he spoke and passed away,  
And that was the last word I had of him.

All the next day they sat along the hall  
And feasted till the sun began to fall  
    And the last healths were drunk ; then silently  
The oarsmen, and he far above them all,

Went shoreward, where the swift ship rocking lay ;  
And the sun sank, and all the paths were grey ;  
Then bent they to the oars, and murmuringly  
The purple water cleft and gave them way.

The twisting-horned slow-swinging oxen low  
Across the fields : light waves in even flow  
Plash on the beach : but when he went from us  
The morning and the sunlight seemed to go.

The gods are angry ; we shall never be  
Now as of old, when far from all men we  
Dwelt in a lonely land and languorous,  
Circled and sundered by the sleeping sea.

Yea, the Olympians then were wont to go  
Among us, visible godheads, to and fro ;  
So far we lived from any sight or touch  
Of evil, in the sea's engirdling flow.

What now if Lord Poseidon, as men say,  
Be wroth against us, and will choke the bay  
With a great mountain ?—yet I care not much ;  
All things are grown the same since yesterday.

Why should I live where everything goes wrong,  
Where hope is dead, and only grief lasts long ?  
I will have rest among the asphodel ;  
For death is stronger, though my love be strong.

There will I see the women he did see,  
Leda and Tyro and Antiope  
    And Ariadne, queens that loved too well  
Of old, and ask them if they loved like me.

The last white stars grow fainter one by one ;  
The folding mists rise up to meet the sun ;  
    Birds twitter on our dewy orchard trees ;  
Day comes : alas ! my day is nearly done.

(He is on land in Ithaca by this.)  
Come now, I pray thee, and with one soft kiss  
    Draw the life out of me and give me ease,  
Queen golden-shafted, maiden Artemis.



## THE RETURN OF ULYSSES

THENCE we sailed forward for a night and day,  
Across blue breadths of water, touched with spray  
    Under a south-west wind, that steadily  
Sped us along our undiscovered way.

But when, gold clouds about him for attire,  
The low broad sun, a lamp of crimson fire,  
    Sank in the west, we looked across the sea,  
And saw far off the land of our desire.

One mountain peak where sky and water ceased,  
Rising above the flush that girt the east,  
    Snow-crowned, steep-falling, while our ship  
    ran on  
Above the purple waste of waves increased.

And the sun sank, and all the sea was grey  
Before us ; and behind us, where the day  
    Lingered north-westward, still the water shone  
Opaline, where the keel had cloven her way.

Thus we sailed forward through the falling night  
In the night wind, while ever on our right  
    Orion wheeled his slowly blazing belt,  
And two large planets rose and sank from sight

Low in the south : and now the stars outspread  
Drew westward, and the summer dew was shed  
Wet on the deck and cordage ; and we felt  
Rather than saw the island, straight ahead,

A vast low shadow in the shimmering sea,  
Whereon the breaking rollers ceaselessly  
Moaned through the darkness as they struck  
the sand  
On that untrodden shore where we would be.

At last we saw their white foam faintly shine  
Around our feet, and on the extreme sea-line  
We beached the ship, and leapt ourselves on  
land,  
And sleeping waited for the Morn divine.

But when the rosy-fingered Morn on high,  
The Lady of the Light, had climbed the sky,  
We rose and sought about us, where the way  
Up to the city of our search might lie.

A mile of river-meadow, where the grass,  
Knee-deep and dewy, swayed to let us pass,  
We crossed, while through the morning misty-  
grey  
Shot gleams of colour as from burnished brass.

The air was still around us ; only nigh  
Upon our left the river murmured by,  
And far behind the lapping waves at play  
Washed on the shingle indistinguishably.

Then the path turned and left the meadow land,  
Winding through corn-fields high on either hand,  
Till on a ridge we climbed, where near the  
way  
About a fountain many poplars stand.

And now we faced the morning ; and the brown  
Heads of the ripe wheat were bowed softly  
down,  
And the mist lifted in the morning breeze :  
And looking forward we could see the town.

A road and double row of shipyards ran  
Between two bays to where the walls began,  
And a white temple and palace girt with  
trees  
Beyond, but nowhere any sign of man.

Then we descended towards it, and on all  
A silence fell ; we did not speak nor call :  
And our dark-eyed sweet-voicèd passenger  
Led on, until we came below the wall.

But as we entered—how can mortal tell  
 In mortal words the marvel that befell?  
 Whether you will believe I hardly care :  
 I know I should have disbelieved as well—

Suddenly out of nothing seemed to spring  
 All round us, clasping us as in a ring,  
 Whence risen or how passed through is  
 marvellous,  
 A mountain, vast and overshadowing.

Sheer-sided it engirt us, towering high  
 All round, but open far above, whereby  
 Some little light fell down and came to us,  
 So that we saw the stars within the sky,

The seven stars sickle-wise above our head ;  
 And we went dumbly on, astonishèd,  
 Unwitting what we did or whence we came,  
 Following where the twilit pathway led.

At last a gleam of firelight led us on  
 To where afar the palace doorway shone,  
 Lit as for banquet ; but the flickering flame  
 Fell on bare places whence the guests were  
 gone.

34 THE RETURN OF ULYSSES

Faintly the scent of burning cedar rolled  
About the tapestries that fold by fold  
    Drooped from the walls; in double row  
        thereby  
Stood torches held by torchbearers of gold.

There, on a couch with spices overstrown,  
And coverings coruscant with precious stone,  
    Clad in a robe of strange Sidonian dye  
} Sea-coloured, lay a sleeping girl alone.

Breathless we stood and did not dare to stir,  
Fearing some wizardry still deadlier;  
    But he who led us half restrained a cry  
} And went straight forward and stooped down to  
    her.

Lo, when a small rain from the warm wet south  
Lights on the grass that pants at noon for drouth;  
    Even so, so softly and so tenderly,  
} He bent above her and kissed her on the mouth.

And in that moment's space from shore and  
    bay  
The mountain without hand was rolled away,  
    And round us like an opening sunflower  
The golden house unfolded into day.

But through the girl a quiver limb by limb  
 Ran, and her dark eyes opened and grew dim,  
     As without any word he clung to her  
 Trembling all over ; and she clung to him.

But as I saw them thus and stood apart,  
 Half blinded and a little sick at heart,  
     My eyes upon the strange bright city turned  
 That seemed not wholly strange, in street or  
     mart,

Or orchard-close, where from a double spring  
 Danced the white water and went murmuring  
     Under the gateway, and with boughs that  
     burned  
 Under their golden load, by many a thing

Of name less known, in rangèd rows kept state  
 Apple and olive, pear and pomegranate,  
     And vineyard plots where by a light wind  
     fanned  
 Swung the rich clusters ; and beyond the gate

That mountain outline and that curve of shore,  
 That harbour with the swinging ships that bore  
     No rudder by the stern-post ; sea and land  
 And people seemed as things long known before :

Till, as I wondered, like a sound long spent,  
 In dreams re-echoed, through my lips there went  
     The old surging rhythm of 'these Phaeacian  
         men,  
 Who dwelt of old time nigh the violent

'Tribe of the Cyclops, in the lawns outspread  
 Of Hypereia, and were sore bested  
     For lack of might before their raids; so  
         then  
 Divine Nausithoüs raised them up and led

'And set in Scheria, far from men that win  
 Wealth by their trade, and walled the city in,  
     And builded houses and made temples tall,  
 And gave them share and share of tilth therein.

'But he ere now was gone, struck down by Fate,  
 To darkness, and Alcinoüs held his state,  
     Skilled by the gods in counsel; therewithal  
 Grey-eyed Athene lighted at his gate.'

This was the land that many men desire  
 In other lands where other pleasures tire;  
     Yet one alone might there find resting-  
         place,  
 Having attained through many a flood and fire,

Even he who sailed with us across the wan  
Reaches of tossing water. Not a man  
But named him now by name, and in his face  
Gazed long, and knew him for the Ithacan.

For us, our resting was not won as yet ;  
To other shores our windy sails were set,  
Ah, and we might not sojourn in the land  
Where they who sojourn all their pain forget.

So but short time we lingered ; for the wind  
Fair-streaming eastward blew, and brought to mind  
Those old companions of our wandering race,  
Whose swifter sails had left our crew behind.

And autumn grew, and swallows on the wing  
Gathered for flight, and songs that reapers sing  
Were over, and along the field-paths went  
Girls with piled baskets red from vintaging.

And the time neared of wrecks on sea and sand  
And streaming storms on many a wave-lashed strand  
Without, though here no wind were violent,  
Nor storm could trouble that enchanted land.

For the last time we feasted there arow  
In the king's palace, when the sun grew low,  
Deep into night with all our company ;  
And in the morning we embarked to go.



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The bay lay quiet in the slant sunshine,  
The white rocks quivering in it ; but, divine,  
Fresh and wind-stirred, far out the open sea  
Rolled in a rough green violet-hollowed line.

We entered in and at the thwarts sate down ;  
And at our going all the Scherian town  
Stood thronged to speed us : softly in the heat  
The water rippled through the oar-blades brown.

And through the palace garden he and she,  
Hand clasped in hand, came down beside the sea,  
And hailed us one by one with voices sweet,  
And bade farewell and all prosperity.

Then our oars dipped together, and the spray  
Flashed in a million sparkles round our way,  
As we with rowing swift and strenuous  
Shot out across the sleeping sunlit bay.

There on the white sea-verge, till all the strand  
Grew dim behind us, still I saw them stand  
In the low sunlight : if they looked at us  
I know not ; but they stood there hand in hand.

## KIBROTH-HATTA AVAH

MOSES

HOT sun, dry sand, yet dew  
Morning and night descends ;  
Praise God who giveth you  
His own Angels for friends,  
Who thus your table dress  
In wildest wilderness.

ISRAELITE

O heavy toil to gather,  
O tasteless, sapless bread,  
Than such faint life far rather  
In the Red Sea we were dead.  
With manna day by day  
Our soul is dried away.

MOSES

Souls mine, brought forth with pain,  
Nursed, carried at my breast,  
Weep not, nor murmur again,

## KIBROTH-HATTAVAH

For surely at last comes rest—  
At last, after this toil  
A land of wine and oil.

## ISRAELITE

Not so, father, not so,  
That land comes never nigher ;  
We move but to and fro  
Following a cloud and fire  
Blown by the winds in heaven,  
Aimless, as sands are driven.

## MOSES

Nay, but can ye forget  
How from the further coast  
Ye passed, nor your feet were wet,  
But Pharaoh and his host  
Were whelmed by the wall of sea  
And you, children, were free ?

## ISRAELITE

Freedom is this ? then liever  
Slavery in Egypt's vales,  
Where flows the sevenfold river  
Whose fish shine with bright scales,  
Where grow fruits without number,  
Green melons, green cucumber.

## MOSES

See from the darkened dawn  
What clouds the Spirit brings ;  
Hark, near and nearer drawn  
The whirr of infinite wings !  
Praise God, fall at His feet,  
Who hath given you flesh to eat.

## ISRAELITE

Flesh, sweet flesh, once more :  
In the veins blood, joy at heart :  
For a week, a month, as of yore  
Bliss : . . .  
. . . ah, too sweet thou art :  
Dark falls, I bite the dust  
Of the grave, the grave of lust.

## DURING MUSIC

PLAY on, play on : we have no need of light ;  
Play on, play on : why should we wish to see ?  
The notes fall softly, softly falls the night,  
And builds a barrier between you and me.

Play on, play on : let nothing break the spell ;  
Play on, play on : tired are my eyes and brain ;  
The music and the darkness like them well,  
And soothe their restlessness to rest again.

Darkness and music flooding all the room,  
Shadow and sound, a blinding and a cry ;  
Nothing beside the music and the gloom—  
They are all, they are life and death, they are  
you and I.

I think the charm can never change or cease,  
I cannot tell how long I have been here,  
I only know that this is perfect peace,  
A mystic calm, a heaven in a tear.

I have no longing for things great and fair,  
Beauty and strength and grace of word or deed,  
For all sweet things my soul has ceased to care,  
Infinite pity—that is all its need.

No hallowed transport of the heavenly throng,  
No happy echo from the saints' abode,  
The voice of many angels and their song,  
The river flowing from the feet of God ;

Only the vague remembrance of a dream,  
Dwelling, a plaintive presence, in the mind,  
Only the patient murmur of a stream,  
Only a bird's cry borne upon the wind.

\* \* \* \*

Lights now! the sound ebbs, the enchantment  
flies ;

Ah, it was sweet ; but these are sweeter far—  
The perfect innocency of your eyes,  
Your smile more lovely than the first-born star.

## MOONRISE IN PIMLICO

EVENING has fallen now on other lands :  
Where Memnon and his monstrous brother meet  
The moon with level visage and set hands  
The long green shadows fall about their feet ;  
Where Trevi ferments in the Roman street  
She shines, and where the tomb of Hadrian stands  
Silvers the waters, and the waves that beat  
Past Tiber-mouth upon Circean sands.

Our morn and eve are bleared with mist and glare,  
The gas-lamps glimmer half the afternoon ;  
But here the town seems not quite unaware  
Of twilight, here an air foretastes of June,  
And through the lilac-branches of the square  
Silent and swift and sacred moves the moon.

FALSE DAWN

AH, love, it was the nightingale  
And not the lark, I know,  
That brought to mind that ancient tale  
Of one who long ago  
Beneath unknown and sultry skies,  
On glimmering pathways led  
By glamour of her perilous eyes,  
Pursued the moon that fled.

Alone he went from deep to deep,  
With aching eyes a-brim ;  
Alone she trod the heavenly steep,  
And looked unstirred on him.  
He followed, down the setting sky,  
That desperate chase, till she,  
Long after midnight, silently  
Dropped down into the sea.

Then iron darkness round him grew,  
And all his pulses ceased ;  
When something, what he knew not, drew  
His eyes into the east ;



Where, high beyond the dells that hid  
Their maiden upland snows,  
A sudden shaft of colour slid  
From lilac into rose.

As one awaking, through the night  
He felt the wash of air ;  
In great dismay, in strange delight,  
He turned, he looked ; and there,  
Through gleaming mist serene outspread,  
And vapours thinly drawn,  
Saw open, far above his head,  
The golden gate of dawn.

Ah, love, it was a dream we dreamed,  
And such come seldom true ;  
Dawn needs must break the spell that seemed  
To make me aught to you.  
Our music was the nightingale  
And not the lark—ah no !  
And not of magic is our tale,  
And not of long ago.

## THE NIGHT WATCHES

COME, O come to me, voice or look, or spirit or  
dream, but O come now ;  
All these faces that crowd so thick are pale and  
cold and dead—Come thou,  
Scatter them back to the ivory gate and be alone  
and rule the night.

Surely all worlds are nothing to Love for Love to  
flash thro' the night and come ;  
Hither and thither he flies at will, with thee he  
dwelleth—there is his home.  
Come, O Love, with a voice, a message ; haste, O  
Love, on thy wings of light.

Love, I am calling thee, Love, I am calling ; dost  
thou not hear my crying, sweet ?  
Does not the live air throb with the pain of my  
beating heart, till thy heart beat ?—  
Surely momentarily thou wilt be here, surely, O sweet  
Love, momentarily.

No, my voice would be all too faint when it  
reached Love's ear, tho' the night is still,  
Fainter ever and fainter grown o'er hill and valley  
and valley and hill,  
There where thou liest quietly sleeping, and Love  
keeps watch as the dreams flit by.

Ah, my thought so subtle and swift, can it not fly  
till it reach thy brain,  
And whisper there some faint regret for a weary  
watch and a distant pain?—  
Not too loud, to awake thy slumber; not too  
tender, to make thee weep;

Just so much for thy head to turn on the pillow  
so, and understand  
Dimly, that a soft caress has come long leagues  
from a weary land,  
Turn and half remember and smile, and send a  
kiss on the wings of sleep.

## MAGDALEN GARDENS

HERE in these walks, where May brings June to  
birth,  
Peace reigns and rest ; these leafy aisles are free  
From harm of axe and hammer, every tree  
Dense-clad with summer, and shrill-tongued with  
mirth.  
Spirit of beauty, very God on earth,  
Earth loves thee ever and is loved of thee ;  
Is it by man alone that thou must see  
Wrong done thee, thankless change and theft and  
dearth ?

Nay, but thou lovedst us too, in days gone by.  
Wilt thou not turn and visit us in pity,  
Here where thou once wast wont to show thy face  
To those whose sons forget thee or deny,  
Before they have destroyed thy holy city,  
And quite laid waste what was thy dwelling-place ?

## THE LIMIT OF LANDS

THE east sea and the utmost sea  
Wash on long leagues of sand ;  
And past the sandhills silently  
Stretches a broad low land.

The limit of the world is se  
Here, and the end of all ;  
White sea-gull and white sail forget  
This way to flit or call.

One infinite bare arch of sky  
Stands flawless overhead ;  
The edges of Eternity  
Fold round, and Time lies dead.

FROM SOPHOCLES

(*Frag.* 678)

CHILDREN, Love truly is not Love alone,  
But many are the names he hath to name :  
Hell, and Desire that wasteth like a flame,  
And passionate Madness, and the mingled moan  
Of Violence and Lamentation ;  
All these for names hath he, being yet the same,  
Who over sea and land hath spread his fame,  
And high in heaven established his throne.

—Thus is Love manifold to mortal sense,  
Makes of day night and is by night a fire,  
Whom he will humbles, whom he will prefers,  
Lord of all grace ; and Hell and Violence,  
Madness and Lamentation and Desire,  
Lo, these are also but Love's ministers.

## ROSE-FRUIT

THEY praised me when they found the new-born  
bud,

And all my blood  
Flamed, as I burst in blossom, to requite  
Their dear delight.

And still they praised my beauty, as I grew  
In the sun's view ;  
Then what will be their joy, said I, to find  
My fruit behind !

But when the wind came, and revealed at last  
My heart set fast,  
They said, 'Twere well this cumbering thing  
should go ;  
New buds will blow.'

## WHISPERS AT COURT

OCTOBER

I

COME away, away,  
Summer at length is sped.  
Was ever a King so gay?  
And now he lieth dead.  
Kiss we his brother's hand,  
Who reigns in the South land.

II

Stay and see, and see ;  
Summer was glorious,  
But gorgeous pageantry  
Doth little profit us.  
His Queen (if truth be told)  
Will scatter abroad his gold.



## NOVEMBER

## I

Come now, now come,  
Autumn her gold hath spent ;  
And through the palace doth roam,  
Moaning her discontent.  
Her voice is shrill and drear,  
A weariness to hear.

## II

Stay yet, yet stay,  
Winter will reign to-night.  
Did you not mark to-day  
His bitter smile, in her sight ?  
He hath a plot, I ween,  
To take captive the Queen.

## HEART AND WIT

It is not for infinity,  
For larger air, and broader sea,  
I long, but for one child, ah me !

Desolate in my room I sit,  
And my heart, questioned by my wit,  
Makes poor attempts to answer it.

*A mere child.* Yes, a child whose face  
Is all I care for, to express  
Colour and form, and time and space.

*Who prattles nonsense.* Ay, may be,  
But woven throughout with subtlety,  
Far, far too deep and high for me.

*While you say nothing.* For my speech  
Would break the spell that the weird witch  
Has finely wrought from each to each.

*Can it be love?* Poor feeble word!  
Confounding each emotion stirred  
By God or man or tree or bird.

*What is it?* Nay, I know not, good,  
But I would learn it, if I could,  
This mystery of flesh and blood.

But this I know, that sun and star  
Are less to me and far less far  
Than certain lights and shadows are.

(And this I fear, that some strange new  
Swift change may come to me or you,  
And we be no more one but two.)

LINES BY A PERSON OF QUALITY

THE loves that doubted, the loves that dissembled,  
That still mistrusted themselves and trembled,  
That held back their hands and would not  
touch ;

Who strained sad eyes to look more nearly,  
And saw too curiously and clearly  
What others blindly clutch ;

To whom their passion seemed only seeming,  
Who dozed and dreamed they were only dreaming,  
And fell in a dusk of dreams on sleep ;  
When dreams and darkness are rent asunder,  
And morn makes mock of their doubts and  
wonder,  
What should they do but weep ?

BRUMAIRE

I

MORN on heroic mountain-land and stream,  
Far, far away, illumined silver skies,  
A slope of ancient olives with their blue  
Dwarf shadows, and your presence there, and  
you  
Meeting my eyes with unaverted eyes :  
These things I saw at daybreak in a dream.

II

That was my dream, and this reality :  
Perpetual sallow twilight, dank and dull,  
A blur of busy feet that come and go,  
Obstinate wheels churning the miry snow,  
Whilst I sit idle, and your pitiful  
Clear eyes have pity but nought else for me.

THE DISPASSIONATE ARTIFICER  
TO HIS LOVE

I WOULD not beg Pygmalion's boon for mine  
Were gods less envious ; if such gifts were doled  
I 'd ask thine actual beauty to behold  
Clear of life's losses, breathlessly divine,  
'Mid pillared porphyry and serpentine  
Set in some chapel delicate and old  
Brass-paved and domed with green and blue and  
gold,  
A hundred lamps hanging about the shrine.

There would I dwell, and have therein delight,  
Thy priest and keeper of thine holy house,  
To do thee sleepless service day and night,  
Foster the hallowed flames that never die,  
Flower-strow the floor, and with pure lips and  
brows  
Worship thy frozen feet of ivory.

## SEPTEMBER

A DAY and a day together,  
That was so little for me !  
Dawn sprang forth of the east,  
Broadened and shone and increased,  
Ah, and so swiftly deceased,  
Too swiftly ; but that had to be.

Roses late in September  
Sweetened the warm dead air ;  
Roses on roses shed  
Fell, and out of their bed  
Love half lifted his head,  
Crying that life was so fair.

Because in and out of the garden,  
Flower of the rose, went one  
At whose presence the roses were stirred,  
For her beauty, the song of a bird  
Made flesh ; and who saw her or heard,  
Heard music, and saw the sun.

Music too sweet for remembrance  
    In the time of the fall of the leaf,  
And the long dark months after two.  
Days of delight, so few!  
(So little at least for you  
    To remember for gladness or grief.)

Sun that burned out of season  
    With the old magnificent flame  
May-time knew, when above her  
Broad elm-branches for cover  
Swayed, and the grass like a lover  
    Kissed her feet as she came.

Ah sweet sad luminous season  
    That could lead to nothing but night  
Snow-barred blue overhead ;  
Rose leaves strewn on the red  
Soil where the year half dead  
    Felt them in dying delight.

What had it been in the summer,  
    When the fall of the year was so sweet ?  
What, but the vision of heaven  
Given, and taken as given ?  
And the steadfast eyes of the seven  
    Stars keep counsel of it.



Dreamer of dreams, reawaken !  
So they say in the night :  
Take thy burden and go ;  
What part is thine in the low  
Laughter of waters that flow  
Out of thy reach in thy sight ?

Gone is the sweet spring-water,  
And the music of it is gone.  
Go thou : this is not thy stay :  
I have given thee a day and a day  
(Saith one) : rise up, go away,  
Thou and thy visions, alone.

I have shown thee the garden of spices  
Once, and the land of the sun :  
Shown and covered from sight :  
Do I not right ? do right !  
Take thy days of delight,  
Bury them deep, and have done.

What, that twice in a lifetime  
Life has been live at thy touch ?  
Twice ; why wilt thou a third ?  
Too much (O song of a bird  
Made flesh ! O passionate word  
Unspoken !) already too much.

Take hold on the months that are many,  
    Leave hold of the days that were few :  
Leave hold ; or look for a worse  
Vision, too high to rehearse,  
So high, it shall cause thee to curse  
    The days because they were two.

Then slowly my heart made answer,  
    Slowly out of its shrine :  
So let it be : it is fit :  
Surely the years as they flit  
Shall dull the remembrance of it,  
    Till not even that shall be mine :

But I and my dead be together,  
    I and my dead be alone ;  
Till the dead be even as I,  
And out of an iron sky,  
With a weary monotonous cry,  
    The wind on the dust make moan.

S O N G

Love walked upon the sea this tranced night, I  
know,  
For the waves beneath his feet ran pale with  
silver light,  
But he brought me no message as on a summer  
night,  
A golden summer night, long ago.

Love walked among the fields of yellow waving  
corn,  
For the poppy blossomed red where his weary  
feet had pressed,  
And my door stood ready open for a long-  
expected guest,  
But he never never came, night or morn.

Perhaps if I wait till the summer swallows flee,  
He will wander down the valley and meet me  
as before,  
Or perhaps he will find me alone upon the shore  
When he comes with the swallows over sea.

## AFTER PARTING

LAST night where that steep pathway skirts the  
wood

Which in lost springs our footsteps used to know,  
Where ever in spring the earliest violets grow,  
We parted with few words ; silence seemed good  
To end with. While together yet we stood,  
Silent we watched the wrathful afterglow  
That brooded o'er the marshy lands below  
And turned their standing waters into blood.

But thunder-murmurs vexing all the night  
Seemed like an angry message from the dead,  
A voice of wasted and dishonoured years,  
That moaned reproach above my stricken head,  
And only ceased, as fearful of the light,  
When morn came chilled and tranquillised with  
tears.

## THE BEAUTY

I LINGERED at the crossing by the Row,  
And endless carriages at even pace  
Rolled on, while still I loitered at my place  
Mesmerised by the human torrent-flow ;  
A woman, fair and famous years ago,  
Was carried by me, and I caught her face,  
Pillowed on silk and canopied with lace,  
Her face, and eyes that wandered to and fro.

I thought, Those eyes were once love's looking-  
glass,  
The world's eyes waited once on those blank eyes ;  
Now she would give her diamonds to mark  
A head turned here and there to watch her pass ;  
And of that bitterness some faint surmise  
Shadowed me as I left the crowded Park.

## SCHIZZO DAL VERO

TO-DAY we still view from this vineyard here  
Villa Albani with its busts and pines,  
Blue Sabine hills, and snow-cloaked Apennines,  
With the wide waste in its brown winter gear ;  
But our new Rome has passed the gates ; we clear  
Fresh space : at noon the workmen ranged in lines  
Munch at their hunks of bread ; and the sun  
shines,  
And this will be a stucco street next year.

Meanwhile in digging see what they have found :  
A little mimic mansion of the dead,  
A marble chest, lies white upon the ground ;  
It gleams and sparkles, pleased to reach the day,  
Drinking the warmth. No epitaph. Instead  
A woman's voice says, ' Quant' è bella eh ! '

## ACROSS THE PARK

THE same tired season in the Row,  
The same tired springtime on the grass,  
The same dull faces pass and pass  
That seemed the same a year ago ;

Against the listless London sky  
The same trees lifting shrouds of green ;  
Just so insipid was the scene,  
And so dispirited was I.

And when I reached this lonelier space  
Last year as by this path I came,  
Only one thing was not the same,  
The unhopèd hazard of a face :

A child's face, sensitively clear,  
And worthier of the Tuscan May ;  
I had forgotten till to-day,  
But now I wish that it were here.

FROM THE PINCIAN

THE cloud-trail moves  
Along the west  
Like a flock of doves  
That wing to rest ;

The red globe drops  
Behind the dome  
That stands and tops  
The world and Rome.

Alone it lifts  
Its head on high ;  
The window-rifts  
Are full of sky.

Dusky and bare,  
A naked frame  
Against the glare  
Of growing flame,

The spectral bulk  
Might seem to be  
Some burnt-out hulk  
On a burning sea.



## A SONG OF THE THREE KINGS

SHE is dead, ah ! she is dead ;  
    Silent is that gentle breath,  
Still and low that golden head ;  
    That sweet mouth is stopped in death.  
Wherefore now we bring to her  
Gold and frankincense and myrrh.

She is dead, yes, she is dead ;  
    Never may we see again  
Purest, holiest maidenhead,  
    Mother without spot or stain.  
'Mid the sleeping lilies fold  
Myrrh and frankincense and gold.

Lo, we come from very far  
    With all simples that we have,  
Caspar, Melchior, Balthasar—  
    Ah ! we came too late to save.  
Scatter we ere we go hence  
Gold and myrrh and frankincense.

ROSE AND LILY

*'Heere's a few Flowres, but 'bout midnight more:  
The hearbes that haue on them cold dew o' th' night.'*

ROSE and lily, white and red,  
From my garden garlanded,  
These I brought and thought to grace  
The perfection of thy face.

Other roses, pink and pale,  
Lilies of another vale,  
'Thou hast bound around thy head,  
In the garden of the dead.

FROM THEOCRITUS

I

HAVE a care of life, O man,  
Seeing how small is all its span.  
    In the season of fierce weather,  
Put not out to sea,  
Lest thou perish as did he,  
    Ship and man together.  
For he hasted without care  
To bring home his Syrian ware,  
Home to Thasos beautiful—  
Cleonicus miserable !  
When the Pleiades 'gan sink  
    He put forth on stormy seas,  
But never reached the further brink,  
    Sinking with the Pleiades.

## II

White Daphnis, he who pipes so clear  
The songs our shepherds love to hear,  
Offers to Pan these little wares,  
Pierced reeds, a stick to throw at hares,  
Sharp hunting-spear and brown fawnskin,  
And scrip he carried apples in.

FROM ALCMAN

MAIDENS with voices like honey for sweetness,  
that breathe desire,  
Would that I were a sea-bird with limbs that  
could never tire,  
Over the foam-flowers flying with halcyons ever on  
wing,  
Keeping a careless heart, a sea-blue bird of the  
spring.

## HELIODORE

(FROM MELEAGER)

O POUR the wine, and as you pour,  
Say *Heliodore, Heliodore,*  
Ever and ever, o'er and o'er.

And let the chaplet for my hair  
Be yesterday's, tho' wet with myrrh,  
To wear in memory of her.

Ah, look, the lover's rose distrest  
Is weeping now to see her rest  
Otherwhere, not upon my breast.

## TYRUS

O TYRUS, who art situate  
    Within the entry of the seas,  
I God who made thee wax so great,  
    Princess among the provinces,  
I God will lay thee desolate.

Thou sealest up the sum ; in thee  
    Have cunning builders perfected  
Thy beauty ; pilots of the sea  
    From far talk of thy goodlihead,  
And ships of Tarshish sing of thee.

Fine linen out of Egypt is  
    Thy covering ; in thy walls are found  
Blue clothes and wrought embroideries  
    In chests of rich apparel, bound  
With cords, among thy merchandise.

With coral, agate, calamus,  
    And all chief spices, night and day  
Thy dwelling was luxurious ;  
    All precious stones from Raämah,  
Beryl and topaz, sardius,

Sapphire and diamond, glistening  
Lay in thy courts ; thy merchant folk  
Out of far Eastern lands did bring  
To thee, as each new morning broke,  
Strange riches from their seafaring.

Thy shipboards were of mountain firs ;  
Tall cedars fell for masts for thee  
In Lebanon ; thy mariners  
Sate on broad thwarts of ivory,  
Wrought by Assyrian carpenters.

The traffickers of Syria  
Occupied alway in thy fairs  
From Helbon, Minnith, Amana,  
With emeralds and broidered wares ;  
Thy ships from far Ionia

Brought fair-haired slaves through mist  
and snow ;  
Vedan with Javan also went  
Within thy markets to and fro ;  
Thy merchants were the excellent  
Of all lands ; I God set them so.

Yea, thou art the anointed one,  
The covering cherub ; stones of fire  
Were for thy treading : yet shall none  
Find thee by searching, in the mire  
And stones men spread their nets upon.



Shall not the isles shake at the dread  
And sound of slaughter midst of thee,  
When the pit holds thee and thy dead  
In low waste places of the sea,  
With cities not inhabited ?

In that day thou whose rumour ran  
Through all the corners of the sea,  
Thou shalt be no God, but a man  
In face of him who slayeth thee,  
For all thy craft Sidonian.

## A BALLAD OF COLOURS

SHE went with morning down the wood  
Between the green and blue ;  
The sunlight on the grass was good,  
And all the year was new.

There Love came o'er the flowers to her,  
A goodly sight to see  
From crownèd hair to wing-feather ;  
' Arise and come with me.'

She walked with him in Paradise  
Between the white and red,  
With Love's own kiss between her eyes,  
Love's crown upon her head.

Why two in heaven should not be thus  
For ever, who may know  
Love spread his wings most glorious ;  
' Arise,' he said, ' I go.'

She came and sate down silently  
Between the grey and grey ;  
The wet wind beat the leafless tree,  
And Love was gone away.

The woodland breaks to flower anew,  
The days bring back the year ;  
But how am I to comfort you,  
My dear, my dear, my dear ?

## THE LOST SELF

SUPPOSING there had been two brothers, twin  
At birth, who grew like young plants in the sun  
To flower, but one died, and the other one  
Each day of life fell lower into sin,  
Betraying his own heart, yet kept therein,  
When all things else were lost and he undone,  
Love of the dead strong and unstained alone,  
Strong even of pitying gods this boon to win :

Aeneas-like, to pass the fearful gate,  
Living, of Death, and in the paths of Hell  
'Mid groves to nether Juno consecrate,  
To find the luckless shade of the boy ; but he  
Turned his pale face away in loathing—well,  
Even so it is with my old self and me.

## WITHIN AND WITHOUT

WHERE the dim forest, crowding stem with stem,  
In dense entanglement blots out the day,  
Sit shadows, clad in weariness of grey,  
And crowned with patience for a diadem.  
The deadly dew down to their garments' hem  
Drips from the bitter branches ; so that they,  
Sunk in those blind recesses, find alway  
Waters of a full cup wrung out to them.

But where the sunlit meadows, warm and dry,  
Stretch flowerful, many an one goes by ; and then  
Into the heavy shadow of the trees—  
So cool it looks !—he gazes envyingly,  
And passing, ' Ah ! ' he murmurs, ' surely these  
Are not in trouble or plagued like other men.'

POLONAISE

(CHOPIN, *Op.* 40, 2)

So long, so long, the solitary night :  
But day will break, and bring the happy light,  
    And then I shall arise and see the sun.  
Nay, for the night has fallen eternally,  
The shadow of death is heavy over me,  
    There is no rising up for such an one.

No gay glad day, no quiet twilight hour,  
No mist of morning or sweet noonday shower,  
    No twitter of birds or murmur of labouring men ;  
Only the wizard mockery of the moon,  
The wind repeating the same weary tune,  
    The dreams that light a little and fly again.

NOCTURNE

(CHOPIN, *Op.* 37, 1)

WHAT are ye looking for, ye poor eyes  
That turn so wearily to the night?  
O thou that leanest there from the sill  
Of the room where the lamplight dims and dies,  
The stars are few and the moon is bright,  
And the trees in the street are asleep and still—  
O wakeful dreamer, what dost thou see?  
Only the wonder of earth and sky, and things too  
great for me.

What art thou looking for, thou poor heart  
That beat'st thy wings like a prisoned bird?  
What bygone promise murmurs again  
Of something secret and set apart  
That eye hath not seen nor ear hath heard  
To give thee solace of wrong and pain?  
O heart, what vision hath come to thee?  
Only the wonder of fond desire, and a hope too  
high for me.

*(From the lighted church outside comes the sound of singing)*

Life is short and time is flying,  
 All our days are full of sighing ;  
 All our hopes are vain and lying—  
     Power and riches, love and fame.  
 One thing only faileth never,  
 And for all our void endeavour,  
 Still the cross must meet us ever,  
     Still the sorrow and the shame.

Is there any that complaineth,  
 And a life of ills disdaineth ?  
 Nought but trouble still he gaineth,  
     Seeking gifts of earthly store ;  
 In the heavenly kingdom rather  
 All thy treasure strive to gather,  
 Where Christ reigneth with the Father  
     And the Spirit evermore.

What art thou looking for, thou poor soul ?  
 Canst thou recover that which is lost ?  
     O bruised and smitten, but not with rods,  
 Is there any hand that can make thee whole ?  
     O thou afflicted and tempest-tost,  
     Thou suppliant, outcast of all the gods,—  
     O soul, what remedy can there be ?  
 Nay, there is nought but sorrow and fear, and a  
     doubt too deep for me.

### THREE MONTHS

SEPTEMBER touched the heather,  
The forest leaves were bright ;  
Whenever we were together  
Why did we always fight ?

The skies were still and sober,  
The gold-strewn paths were wet ;  
O aimless endless October,  
Why could we not forget ?

November hazes smother  
The hills, and the year's downfall ;  
Why do we love each other  
Now to the end of all ?



## AN AUTUMN LILY

Most sweet of all the flowers memorial  
That Autumn tends beneath his wasted trees,  
Where wearily the unremembering breeze  
Whirls the brown leaves against the blackening wall ;  
More sweet than those that summer fed so tall  
And glad with soft wind blowing overseas ;  
Through all incalculable distances  
Of many shades that swerve and sands that crawl,  
Most sweet of all !

When comes the fulness of the time to me  
As yours is full to-day, O flower of mine ?  
Touched by her hand who evermore shall be,  
While the slow planets circle for a sign,  
Till periods flag and constellations fall,  
Most sweet of all.

AFTER SUNSET

THE last light hangs over hidden day,  
The last wings flutter into the west,  
The last breeze kisses the sleepy leaves,  
And my weak heart tremulous strains and  
grieves,  
Because it were fain to fly with the rest  
From the dusk and the shadows and far away ;

Fain to break its pitiful bars,  
To follow the birds and wind and light  
Beyond the land and beyond the sea  
To the unknown haven where it would be,  
Leaving me here to the tranquil night,  
Silence in heaven and watchful stars.

I should waken never to doubt or pain,  
Lost in untroubled tides of sleep,  
Whether eve were ruddy or dawn were pale,  
Or the lark sang or the nightingale,  
I should never laugh any more or weep,  
For my heart it would never come back again.

## THE SECRET OF THE EAST

(VOPISC. *Aurelian*, c. 29)

VARANES, when Aurelian's legionaries  
Had stormed the sand-girt City of the Sun,  
Sent him a crimson pall from Ctesiphon  
Steeped in such unimaginable dyes  
From Indian sandyx-vats, that to men's eyes  
Their triple Tyrian by comparison  
Grew ashen-coloured, and all Rome was one  
In eagerness to match so fair a prize.

Emperors sent, ships voyaged, lives were spilt  
Far among waste and perilous lands ; but all  
Who came, came empty-handed : on the wall  
Of the great temple that Domitian built  
Blazed sole the scornful present of the King,  
That splendour of strange Asian colouring.

## CALIGULA

(THE BASALT BUST AT THE CAPITOL)

BEING in torment, how should he be still ?  
The slim neck twists ; the eyes beneath the wide  
Bent Claudian brows shrink proud and terrified ;  
Along the beardless cheek the muscles thrill  
Like smitten lutestrings. Can no strength of will  
Silence this presence ever at his side,  
This hateful voice, that will not be denied,  
That talks with him, and mutters 'kill,' and 'kill' ?

O dust and shade, O dazed and fighting brain,  
O dead old world that shuddered on his nod,  
Only this iron stone endures ; and thence  
Looks forth a soul in everlasting pain,  
The ghost of Caesar, maniac and god,  
And loathes the weakness of omnipotence.

ON THE TOILET-TABLE  
OF QUEEN MARIE-ANTOINETTE

AT SOUTH KENSINGTON MUSEUM

THIS was her table, these her trim outspread  
Brushes and trays and porcelain cups for red ;  
Here sate she, while her women tired and curled  
The most unhappy head in all the world.

ON HIS MISTRESS' EYEBROW

WHEN Love made Letty's face, his mother said,  
'Too pale, the hair lacks gold, the cheeks lack red,'  
Yet smiled upon his work, and touched the brow,  
And drew it lovelier than Love knew how.

## WORSHIP

**HERE** will I sit, front row and middle chair ;—

Round me the congregation kneels and stands :—

**Heigho!** at last the Consecration prayer !

—Hurrah ! I cannot see the Bishop's hands.

CHARITY

POOR Susan drinks, and cannot sew a stitch,  
I think she'll do to make the Jones's frocks,—  
Miss Tomkins has no children,—but she's rich ;  
I'll pop this foundling down her letter-box.



### NATURE'S CARAVANSERAI

TAKE down the tapestries we hung for Summer,  
And spread them for a carpet on the floor ;  
'Tis faded, but 'twill serve for the new-comer.  
The Queen may come again ? fresh are in store.

FALSE SPRING

SUCH joy, such hopeless hope of buried bliss  
Stirs me, as once wearily wandering  
Deep in the wintry wood a vision of Spring.  
—I found bare boughs run o'er with clematis.

LE BOIS DORMANT

THEY sleep, their shields ignobly load the trees  
Beneath a thousand changes of the moon ;  
Her well-starred choice Fate sends at last, but these,  
Who came not all unworthy, came too soon.

AN EXCHANGE

(EPICLETUS FOR ANTIPOUS)

BE mine the bust your scruples hardly save,  
And yours the envied manual,—yet to me,  
The freedman teaches how to live a slave,  
The slave how Christ Himself would set us free.

A PASTORAL

My love and I among the mountains strayed  
When heaven and earth in summer heat were  
still,  
Aware anon that at our feet were laid  
Within a sunny hollow of the hill  
A long-haired shepherd-lover and a maid.

They saw nor heard us, who a space above,  
With hands clasped close as hers were clasped in  
his,  
Marked how the gentle golden sunlight strove  
To play about their leaf-crowned curls, and kiss  
Their burnished slender limbs, half-bared to his  
love.

But grave or pensive seemed the boy to grow,  
For while upon the grass unfingered lay  
The slim twin-pipes, he ever watched with slow  
Dream-laden looks the ridge that far away  
Surmounts the sleeping midsummer with snow.

These things we saw ; moreover we could hear  
The girl's soft voice of laughter, grown more bold  
With the utter noonday silence, sweet and clear :  
    ' Why dost thou think ? By thinking one grows  
    old ;  
Wouldst thou for all the world be old, my dear ? '

Here my love turned to me, but her eyes told  
Her thought with smiles before she spake a  
    word ;  
And being quick their meaning to behold  
I could not choose but echo what we heard :  
' Sweet heart, wouldst thou for all the world be  
    old ? '



## A SONG OF DOVES

O MILK-WHITE doves in your heaven of blue,  
    Listen, O white-winged doves,  
My heart is spanned in a little hand  
To hold it or let it fly like you,  
    To keep it or let it fly  
Out of the region of hates and loves,  
    To bid it live or die.

A hundred wings in a heaven of blue,  
    A hundred milk-white wings,  
The white-winged loves with the eyes of doves  
Flutter and beat the air like you,  
    Wheel and flicker above,  
And daze my eyes to the sense of things,  
    And blind my soul with love.

A single dove in the heaven above,  
    A flower white-winged on the blue,  
One dove alone when the doves are flown,  
O fly to the garden of my love  
    Where my love is wont to be,  
Remember true what she tells to you  
    And tell it again to me.

THE DEBATE OF THE HEART  
AND SOUL

‘SISTER, what wouldst thou?’ so the soul doth cry  
Deep out of midnight to the broken heart,  
Lying where she fell, whence she may not depart  
Except one heal her. And in faint reply,  
‘Only to die,’ she wails, ‘only to die,  
Only to die, if death might ease my smart ;  
O soul, I am not fashioned as thou art,  
Dowered with thine awful immortality.’

And the soul answers darkly : ‘ Even thus.  
Thou and thy bodily vesture shalt decay ;  
Pain’s self through length of pain shall wear away,  
And no new life shall come to quicken us ;  
Till one dread day in darker silence I  
Shall know thee dead and know I cannot die.’



## REVOLT

OF all sweet things wherewith man's life is cursed,  
One is the worst and sweetest, only one :  
Love, that is lord of all and recks of none,  
And slays the children he hath borne and nursed.  
Yet many love him, and with hearts athirst  
Seek to his sanctuary and heights unwon,  
From sundawn until sundown hides the sun,  
And the night holds them, and they know the  
    worst.

Yea, spread thy wings, O Love, if so thou wilt ;  
With no more blood of sacrifices spilt  
Will I henceforth before thine altar bow ;  
With no more flowers and prayers and tears out-  
    poured  
Will I adore thee ; thou art not my lord ;  
Love is of heaven : in nowise such art thou.

## SUBMISSION

EVEN as I spoke, with wings no more outspread,  
But furled and fulgorant, Love himself came by ;  
And my heart leaped and stopped, as silently  
He caught my hair, and bending back my head,  
'Look on me well : I am thy lord,' he said.  
Then I looked up, and saw once more anigh  
The golden glory of his deity  
In cold predominance unviolated.

Then as my heart stood still, I heard him say,  
'I gave the passion ; shall I spare the pain ?  
Thou hast known my glory, thou for this thy day ;  
Wouldst thou unknow me and be glad again,  
Fool ?' And my eyes brimmed up with tears, and  
low  
Into the darkness I made answer : 'No.'

## THE DRY LAKE

THE rushes stand where the rushes stood,  
Stiff and tall, but the lake is dry ;  
They will stand so still in the lonely wood,  
Till the world shall die.

No wind makes rustle the weary reeds ;  
The gentle gale and the rushing blast,  
As they follow where spring or the storm-king leads,  
Pause aghast.

The red sun flames with a steady light,  
No smallest cloud in the brazen skies ;  
The moon looks down with a pale affright  
In her quiet eyes.

No song of bird can now come near,  
No buzz of insect ever again,  
No ripple of pleasant water, or tear  
Of the dripping rain.

The reeds stand now where the reeds then stood,  
Above them hangs the silent sky ;  
Around them shivers the lonely wood,  
And the lake is dry.

TO MY TOTEM

*'Sub tegmine fagi'*

Thy name of old was great :  
What though sour critics teach  
'The beech by the Scaean gate  
Was not indeed a beech,'  
That sweet Theocritus  
The ilex loved, not thee?—  
These are made glorious  
Thro' thy name, glorious tree.

And sure 'twas 'neath thy shade  
Tityrus oft did use  
(The while his oxen strayed)  
To meditate the Muse.  
To thee 'twas Corydon  
(Sad shepherd) did lament  
Vain hopes and violets wan  
To fair Alexis sent.

Our singers love thee too.  
In Chaucer's liquid verse  
Are set thy praises due  
The ages but rehearse :  
Tho' later poets bring  
Their homage still, and I  
The least of those who sing  
Thy name would magnify.

## TO MY TOTEM

For long ago my sires,  
Ere Hengist crossed the sea  
To map our English shires,  
Gave up their heart to thee,  
And vowed if thou wouldst keep  
Their lives from fire and foe,  
Thou too shouldst never weep  
The axe's deadly blow.

Thou hast my heart to-day :  
Whether in June I sit  
And watch the leaves at play,  
The flickering shadows flit ;  
Or whether when leaves fall  
And red the autumn mould,  
I pace the woodland hall  
Thy stately trunks uphold.

Thou hast my heart, and here  
In scattered fruit I see  
An emblem true and clear  
Of what my heart must be :—  
Hard sheath and scanty fare,  
Yet forced on every side  
To break apart and share  
Small gifts it fain would hide.

## THE ROBIN IN JANUARY

*' Hey robin, jolly robin '*

GREEN again, O green to-day  
Garden lawn, and mossy park ;  
They have laid a while away  
Winter's ermine cloak ; and hark,  
Hark, our robin, who but he ?  
Singing blithe as blithe can be.

'Tis not passion's melting note,  
Though his breast be red like fire ;  
Nor can his, like thrush's throat,  
Raise to rapture each desire :  
'Tis a song of simplest joy,  
Like the laughter of a boy.

Robin, keep thy happy heart,  
Through the year so well begun :  
Live and love, unheard, apart.  
So may we, when Summer's done,  
Tired with art and passion-spent,  
Hear and share thy sweet content.

## THE GEORGICS

ON Tuscan farms revolve each changeless year  
The world-old toils of the world in order meet :  
Labour is good and rest from labour sweet,  
Kind leafage and mossed cave and living mere :  
Through silver olive-orchards ploughs the steer,  
And shepherds sing in shaded summer-heat ;  
But who has eyes to track the wood-god's feet,  
The wine-god's world-song who has ears to hear ?

Virgil, our brain-sick life tossed to and fro,  
Nature or art too tired, too blind, to know,  
Feels yet their secret in thy magic scroll :  
That high-rapt calm so far remote from us,  
Yet not too steadfastly felicitous  
Nor too divinely alien to console.

THE AENEID

FROM pastoral meads, from task of field and fold,  
To war, to love, to death by land and sea  
He turned, and sang in soft Parthenope  
Heroic deeds, and peoples great of old,  
Who dwelt where Nar and Amasenus rolled  
By Sabine slope or Volscian low-country,  
Mingling the dimly-shadowed days to be  
With days long dead in his high verse of gold.

Yet ever sickening at loves ill allied,  
Thwart fates, vex'd wanderings, waste of princely  
    blood,  
Harsh trumpet-notes and tossing fields of foam,  
In twilight visions of the mystic wood  
He sought, with longing eyes unsatisfied,  
The immortality he gave to Rome.



FROM EPICHRMUS

(*Frag. 126*)

CELL by cell slowly gathering flesh and passions  
Is built this mortal frame ;  
Cell by cell slowly sundering it disfashions,  
And returns whence it came.

Down into earth passes the earthly clothing ;  
Up into air the breath.  
What in all this is hard to follow ? nothing,  
From birth through life to death.

EPILOGUE  
TO THE *BIRDS* OF ARISTOPHANES

CITIZENS, hear us !  
Laugh not to scorn  
Me Peisthetaerus,  
Athenian born,  
And Euelpides here out of Crios, discrowned and  
unwinged and forlorn.

For a year and a day  
We were kings and divine ;  
All the world came to pay  
Fresh flowers at the shrine  
Of the Lady of Lordship that came from the height  
of the heaven and was mine.

High up beyond cloudland,  
Where skies are unstirred,  
Stood the towers of the proud land  
Built by the bird  
For my palace and realm everlasting, the house  
that arose at my word.

## EPILOGUE TO THE

Beneath and around it  
Heaven lay spread ;  
Sunlight enwound it ;  
Stars overhead  
Lit it up through the twilight that lingered all night  
till the dawning grew red.

Fowl of all feather  
Rustled and flew,  
Apart and together,  
From blue into blue  
Through the air that was mine in dominion, the  
vault of the fire and the dew.

Earth, far under  
Stretched like a clod,  
In terror and wonder  
Shook at my nod,  
And prayed to my deity duly, and held me for  
sovereign God.

The gods high sitting  
Looked on my town,  
And shrank and submitting  
Sent me the crown,  
And there was I perched in the centre, well armed  
to strike upward or down.

Throned without pity,  
Crowned without fear,  
Cloud-cuckoo-city  
Stood for a year,  
And ought to have stood so for ever and ever ; and  
lo, I am here.

How could harm come to us  
There on our height ?  
Thunder was dumb to us,  
Stars in our sight  
Rose in their regular order, and day followed day  
into night.

Never a token,  
Above or below,  
That our power might be broken,  
Our royalty go,  
Our city roll up like a cobweb and vanish where  
no man may know.

In bright heaven's hollow  
Over us two  
Hoopoe and swallow  
Fluttered and flew,  
Hawk circled and kingfisher darted, a flash of  
vermilion and blue.

All things were there for us ;  
Life was complete ;  
Fairer than fair for us,  
Sweeter than sweet,  
With a sky that was reared for our covering, an  
earth that was framed for our feet.

Men that are mortal  
Bowed at our throne ;  
Gods at our portal  
Stood unknown ;  
There was no one to help or to hinder but only  
our kingship alone.

So, glorious and golden,  
The whole world's crown,  
That no fire might take hold on,  
No water might drown,  
With its winged multitudinous clustering people,  
lay Cloud-cuckoo-town.

Athenians, pity !  
See me again  
Hurled from my city,  
Frog of the fen  
Who was winged and a bird and am wingless, a  
god tumbled down among men.

FRAGMENT

MIGHT latter days recover  
The young world's flower and feast,  
Or lips of modern lover  
Renew old loves deceased ;

Then might I yet importune  
Love's unresponding shrine,  
And dream such happier fortune  
Were here, and now, and mine.

PULVIS ET UMBRA

FROM which gate came this dream, O Proserpine ?  
In the dumb haunted autumn of a grove  
Whose golden leaves no breath had power to  
move,  
Hollowed for adoration like a shrine,  
Lit with her looks as with lamps crystalline,  
But bowered and screened from the sun's light  
above,  
Through dusk and silence I beheld my love,  
And my mouth ached till it should call her mine,  
For still her maiden mouth and eyes were kind,—  
But when I stirred there came an eddying gust,  
And all her raiment changed to leaves wind-blown,  
And all her woven hair became as wind,  
And her white face and throat wind-driven dust,  
And I shrieked out, and woke, and was alone.

## SPELLBOUND

THE burden of the valley of vision.  
Magical shapes, as in a crystal ball,  
Sweep past through shadowy spaces, and in all  
A sole face passes and a single tone ;  
Ever one wailing down the wind is blown,  
And ever under moonless midnight's pall,  
Cinctured in death-white folds funereal,  
One phantom glides, averted and alone.

Dumbly he watches, with his eyes on flame,  
Those features that he knows and dare not name  
Gather from gloom and vanish into gloom ;  
A word might save her, and his pale lips stirred  
Quiver in anguish and would say that word,  
Yet may not open, lest they seal her doom.



LES REFLETS

(AFTER HUGUES LE ROUX)

MORE magic than the moving moon above  
The moon that moves within the lake below ;  
More to the poet than warm living love  
The images of love dead long ago.

FROM THE WINDOW IN DECEMBER

'PERISHED in pride.' Dread thou the poet's tomb,  
O sweet-voiced thrush, who dignified and shy  
Rufflest thy throat, and swell'st, and standest by,  
While cheeping sparrows jostle for a crumb.

## EAST AND WEST

SWEATERS we rail at, sad and serious,  
But hunt the trail of Cheapness with the rest,  
For look, how far the East is from the West,  
So far has Consequence been set from us.

FELLOW-TRAVELLERS

HE joined me, and we jested side by side  
At life and fate, fools here and knaves above,  
And when our pathways parted, Who, I cried,  
Art thou? and he, Farewell : they call me Love.

ON A DEAD FRIEND

(FROM THE ANTHOLOGY)

OUR boundless kindness, dear and silent head,  
Now gathered lies within this narrow grave ;  
Thee I seek always, thou amid the dead  
For me drink not of that oblivious wave.

A FUNERAL

• THE snow is frozen hard upon the ground,  
Hard frozen is the grief in every eye ;  
The south will blow, and all these tears unbound  
Will find thy face together, by and by.

## THE YOUNG LANDLORD

It was hot in the dining-room ; but the worst  
Of all was the women's din.  
A cigarette in the garden first,  
The coffee when he comes in.

No moon outside, no star,—pitch-dark,  
Nor a breath in the hushed cold air ;  
Yet there must be some sort of breeze, for hark,  
It rustled the bushes there.

What a beastly match, and the only one ;  
Why on earth can't the heads stick fast ?  
Supposing it drops this time he's done,  
Confound——no, it's right at last !

The transient flame lights up his hands,  
And his face and his curly head,—  
A flash in the laurels near where he stands ;  
The boy lurches forward, dead.

## FIRST SNOW

THE fallows yellow and frigid  
'Mongst frozen snowfields lie :  
The black trees lift up rigid  
Their arms to the leaden sky.

O'er barns and haystacks whitened  
The larches sigh and sway.  
The hedgerow grasses are lightened  
With light not of the day.

And sheep on the south slope browsing  
Close huddled for the cold,  
In a silvery mist drowsing,  
Have all their fleece of gold.

But I know tho' round and above her  
Are spells of the wizard death,  
That waiting the Spring her lover  
Summer but slumbereth.

And I would my heart were lying,  
Where Summer lies asleep,  
Lulled by the fir-trees sighing,  
And tinkling bells of sheep.



## THE ROCKET

VOICELESS the night, and blind of moon or stars,  
The dim tide groping at the river-walls :  
Sudden on high breaks a red fire, like Mars  
Falling from heaven, and shattering as he  
falls.

PASTEL

THE lowering sooty London sky  
Flashes with roses manifold ;  
The spattered feet of the passer-by  
Slip and slide in silver and gold ;

Lilac and violet and blue  
The lines of chimney-pots and bricks ;  
The omnibus with its spectre crew  
Fades like the purple barque of Styx.

## HALF-WAY IN LOVE

You have come, then ; how very clever !  
I thought you would scarcely try ;  
I was doubtful myself,—however  
You have come, and so have I .

How cool it is here, and pretty !  
You are vexed ; I 'm afraid I 'm late ;  
You 've been waiting—oh, what a pity !  
And it 's almost half-past eight.

So it is ; I can hear it striking  
Out there in the grey church-tower.  
Why, I wonder at your liking  
To wait for me half an hour !

I am sorry ; what have you been doing  
All the while down here by the pool ?  
Do you hear that wild-dove cooing ?  
How nice it is here, and cool !

How that elder piles and masses  
Her great blooms snowy-sweet ;  
Do you see through the serried grasses  
The forget-me-nots at your feet ?

And the fringe of flags that encloses  
The water ; and how the place  
Is alive with pink dog-roses  
Soft-coloured like your face !

You like them ? shall I pick one  
For a badge and coin of June ?  
They are lovely, but they prick one,  
And they always fade so soon.

Here 's your rose. I think love like this is,  
That buds between two sighs,  
And flowers between two kisses,  
And when it 's gathered dies.

It were surely a grievous thing, love,  
That love should fade in one's sight ;  
It were better surely to fling love  
Off while its bloom is bright,

The frail life will not linger,  
Best throw the rose away,  
Though the thorns having scratched one's finger  
Will hurt for half a day.

What, tears? you would keep it and see it  
Fade and its petals fall?—  
If you will—why, Amen, so be it:  
You may be right after all.

## A GREAT MUSICIAN

His fortune paid him homage from the first,  
Nor gave in earlier years  
The prophet's fate divinely blest and curst,  
God's word that no man hears.

His life was music, a continuous chain  
Of golden harmonies,  
Blent with such gifts as make existence gain,  
And worthy of the wise.

And dear were fame and friendship ; more than  
each  
His soul for ever sought  
One son. This boy the father would not teach  
Music, nor have him taught.

Strange, inconsistent, cruel,—was it so?  
Love's tyrant tender heart  
Would have the best-beloved never know  
The agony of art.

## MAGDALEN WALKS IN WINTER

A SHEET of water set about with trees,  
Bare branches black against the evening sky,  
And black reflected in the leaden mere ;  
The chill forbidding waters seem to freeze,  
Save when an outcast wind unwillingly  
Shudders across their surface as in fear.

Out to the west the sky is dusky red,  
And, cleft in sunder by that lovely tower,  
Crowns its dim pinnacles with one dim star ;  
Lo, for a signal that the day is dead  
The chapel bells toll out and tell the hour,  
Answered by city echoes from afar.

Winter is passing by us where we stand ;  
Can you not hear his footfall on the mould  
And catch his breathing through the twilight  
air ?  
All things are dumb and patient to his hand,  
Whose guerdon is the darkness and the cold,  
The cold like death and darkness like despair.

## IMPRISONED

THE last half-hour is come and past,  
The last good-bye is said,  
The outer door is shut, the last  
Faint echo fallen dead.  
My heart too is shut fast, shut fast,  
Close barred with bars of lead.

None may come in, none may go out ;  
I sit apart alone ;  
Long days I sit, silent, in doubt  
If the heart be turned to stone ;  
Long months—and then one day, a shout ;—  
At once the walls fall down.



## THE PASSIONATE PILGRIM

BECAUSE my days were dreary,  
And my best hope was dead,  
Because I was weak and weary  
And sick in body and soul,  
In a desert place and lonely  
Love came to me and said,  
If I would serve him only  
That he would make me whole.

Because I was proud and wilful  
And hard to break or bend,  
Because I was all unskilful  
In the secrets which are Love's,  
Because my heart was blameless,  
He forced it to offend,  
And bowed it low in nameless  
Dark temples and dim groves.

Because Love found me weeping  
Who hates the sight of pain,  
He drugged and left me sleeping  
And I woke to see him fly ;  
By field, and hill, and city  
I look for death in vain,  
For because Love hath no pity  
He will not let me die.

## GARDEN-HEATH

GIVE me a flower for my accepted rhymes ;  
Give me a flower at least since we must part ;  
I do not say to wear it next my heart,  
Only to keep and look at it sometimes.

But do not give a rose, I have a rose ;  
Nor jasmine, for that breathes of Juliet,  
My Romeo days are done ; nor mignonette,  
The sweet dull flower,—I have a piece, who knows?

Choose me a flower you like ; or if I may,  
I'll choose one for myself, for that were best ;  
And I will find a flower that shall suggest  
Only yourself, this terrace, and to-day.

That garden-heath, hardy and delicate,  
Taller than are her cousins of the hill,  
Whiter and prouder, from the wind and chill  
Cornered and covered in her garden-state,

I wonder if she envies them, don't you,  
Their freedom ? such a gipsy plant might chafe  
Often at gardens, though they're warm and safe.  
Give me the heath, for that I think would do.

## THE VIGIL

THE restless years that come and go,  
The cruel years so swift and slow,  
Once in our lives perchance will show  
What they can give that we may know ;

Too soon perchance, or else too late ;  
We may look back, or we may wait ;  
The years are incompassionate,  
And who shall touch the robe of Fate ?

Once only ; haply if we keep  
Watch with our lamps, and do not sleep,  
Our eyes shall, when the night is deep,  
Behold the bridegroom's face,—and weep.

Alas ! for better far it were  
That Love were heedless of our prayer,  
Than that his glory he should bare  
And show himself to our despair.

Better to wander till we die,  
And never come the door anigh,  
Than weeping sore without to lie  
And get no answer to our cry.

O child, the night is cold and blind,  
The way is rough with rain and wind,  
Narrow and steep and hard to find ;  
But I have found thee—love, be kind.

DOUBT

OH that we too, above this earthly jar  
One clear command obeying, we too might  
Our path preordinate direct aright,  
Moving in music where the planets are ;  
Or motionless like to a fixed star  
Might wait and watch above this weary night  
The far-off coming of the morning light,  
His feet upon the eastern hills afar.

Alas, alas ! bewildered, desolate,  
A horror of thick darkness wraps us round ;  
And some sit sadly down, and weep, and wait,  
And some fall headlong in the gulf profound,  
And some creep on by their own torches' blaze :—  
O sun, shine forth, as in the ancient days !

## CREATION

God said, and the light was, and the light said,  
'Lo, I am God'; and the light changed and died,  
And grew a great tree which on every side  
Thrust out, and would have filled the earth, but  
    stayed,  
Finding itself not God; and there was made  
A little bird with a shrill voice that cried,  
'God, God, God, God,' till evening, when its pride  
Breathed itself out at a man's feet dismayed:

And Adam said, 'I, I am God,' and ate  
And saw that he was naked, and for shame  
He died like the poor bird; and him did Seth  
Hide underground with Abel, and then wait  
Wondering if he were God, or if there came  
One mightier who would not let slip God's breath.

## SUMMER DAWN

THROUGH smoke-fog that nightly  
The stars conceals,  
Daybreak lightly  
Glimmering steals,  
And the city has rest for an hour from perpetual  
thunder of wheels.

Ah, but to follow  
Where, far from the street,  
Brooks in the hollow  
Mingling fleet,  
And in silvery greyness of morning the folds of the  
valley are sweet ;

Where in air unpolluted  
And cold bright dew,  
Morn rose-footed  
Wakens anew  
The sheep from the grass where they slumbered,  
the flowers in the hedge where they grew ;

SUMMER DAWN

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And mists on the meadow,  
Upcurled and withdrawn,  
Cover in shadow  
And dimness of dawn  
Short cries of the birds in the branches, faint  
flutter of leaves on the lawn.



## FATE'S PRISONER

LONG years ago in that enchanted land  
With joy and shouting he received the crown,  
And reigned among those echoing bells that drown  
Fear and remembrance ; till from wastes un-  
scanned

Fate, like a mist, crept silent o'er the sand,  
And with clear eyes that neither smile nor frown  
Discerned and destined, saw and smote him down,  
And disencrowned his head and bound his hand.

Now with bound hand and disencrownèd head  
He takes Fate's gift, and does not cry nor strive ;  
But with eyes fixed on what is past and fled  
Waits silently for what may yet arrive,  
Praising the dead which are already dead  
More than the living which are yet alive.

## MOON AND TIDES

EVEN as a watcher, when the rain at even  
Stops, and the clouds drift vaporous and thin,  
Sees a pale curve gleam silver out of heaven,  
Hails it, and knows the golden month begin ;

She for a space from splendour into splendour  
Evening by evening gathering her light,  
Last through a twilight roseate and tender  
Rises full-orbed, the lady of the night.

Last? but as long again and the returning  
Mutable maiden melts out of her sphere,  
Dwindles, and night prolongs itself in yearning,  
Lost in a longing till she re-appear :

So in changed form, in fluctuating sweetness,  
Shines the one Hope, discovered and concealed,  
Now over life in dominant completeness  
Lifting the regent circle of her shield ;

Now as that faint incognisable crescent,  
Seen or imagined, where the eye can mark  
Only the least ray pale and evanescent,  
Dim through a dream, a glimmer in the dark ;

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Now, in such clouds as compass and environ  
Eyes that had known and loved her as she grew,  
Lost in the sky's immitigable iron,  
Trace of the old or token of the new,

Yet as, unaltered by the month's estranging,  
Daylong and nightlong all the seas are hurled  
Tide after tide, and changeless in their changing,  
Follow her pathway round and round the world:

So the sick heart with infinite endeavour  
Seeking but one perfection of the goal,  
Turns in the night as in the day for ever  
Back to that Hope's persistence ; and the soul,

Still, though the Presence vanish from the portal,  
Still, though the flame sink fainting in the shrine,  
Surges and strains and knows herself immortal,  
Plunges through death and finds herself divine

## SUMMER AND WINTER

A SHADOWED garden in the cool of the day,  
Faint from June heat : the last birds on the wing  
Noiseless : and where the yellow evening  
Melted to blue, the first pale stars astray.  
Silent we sate, for silence seemed to say  
One word : and quietly, like a hidden spring,  
Rippled the sound of garden-watering ;  
Bells through the soft air sounded, far away.

Dead hour of that dead evening, once again  
In the scent of this faded wallflower  
Thou livest, and I sit silent there by her.  
And therewith bitterly, through wind and rain  
That vex to-day this wintry Northern sea,  
My heart cries out, O living love, to thee.

## LOVE UNRETURNED

My soul, where is the fruit of lifelong pain  
To render to the husbandmen above?  
Thou hast been watered by my tears of love  
For that pure spirit whose serene disdain  
Pierced like a ploughshare thro' thee, leaving plain  
Forgotten depths wind-sown, whereout I strove  
Unceasingly to gather what might prove,  
In time of harvest, tares instead of grain.

'Alas!' my soul said, 'had but Love passed by  
And cast into the furrows, as he went  
Sowing beside all waters in the spring,  
Methinks I had borne fruit abundantly  
For God to garner, as He sits intent  
Above the angels at their winnowing.'

## MELANCHOLIA

How like December fog my vague surmise  
O'ercrept our world, and blotted out the day,  
Till love irradiant from thy clear eyes  
Purged it and hung in crystals, clear as they.  
And though in hues too white the world was  
dressed,  
Not spring-like blossoming, but slumber-drowned,  
I joyed in beauty I should ne'er have guessed  
Had not my loss thy dear redemption found.

Ah, love! when all is done that love can do,  
The world grows dim again, and dense the air:  
A foggy cloud still mantles, hiding you,  
And chiller falls the damp of my despair.  
Would only heaven have pity, as I pray,  
And send its wind to blow this mist away.

## SUMMER'S STORY

BETWEEN the dawning and the day  
Love came to us upon his way ;  
    By meadow-grass and valley-springs  
He would not make a longer stay,  
    But shook the dew from off his wings,  
And spread them ; and the long ascent  
Flashed into gold the way he went.

Then the sun rose, and on the hill  
High over us we saw Love still,  
    Under the cliff-top in the shade,  
Where fern and bramble climb at will ;  
    And the light breeze about him strayed  
And sank to silence, and the wheat  
Made no more stir about his feet.

Thus the day grew, till over us  
The blue noon shone most glorious,  
    Without a cloud from west to east,  
One blaze on all the slope ; and thus  
    The burning afternoon increased,  
And in the valley it seemed good  
To rest, between the stream and wood.

So the hours passed till the sun fell,  
And shadows lengthened in the dell,  
    While down the awakened air came by  
The echo of a faint farewell ;  
    And where the cliff's edge met the sky,  
For the last time our startled sight  
Saw Love on the pale verge of night.

Now night is come indeed, and far  
Out of the darkness, star by star,  
    The heaven unfolds into the heaven :  
In soundless curves oracular  
    The three stars answer to the seven :  
And where the Serpent's coils return,  
Their lustres burn and fade and burn.

And far beyond them, bare and black,  
The hollow orbs of space draw back  
    Their huge impenetrable vault ;  
Where no least ray lights up the track,  
    That, hard and smooth as hewn basalt,  
Through rigid depths of space untrod  
Goes out beyond the sight of God.

## FOR AN ANNUNCIATION

Lo, this is she whom the Archangel saw  
When, from the inmost Presence earthward sped,  
He sought in Nazareth God's favourèd.  
What strange fulfilment of the ancient law,  
Uttered by angels, makes her eyes withdraw  
Their gaze, and all her cheek forget its red,  
While softly, round the pale gold of her head,  
The shafted sunlight gathers into awe ?

Far off the daily bustle of the street  
Murmurs unheard, where even but now her feet  
Among the village women lightly trod.  
His voice has ceased ; and all around her there  
Is drip of well-water, and in the air  
A silver silence, and the peace of God.

TO M. B.-J.

ACROSS Arcadian hills of old,  
With flying hair and bow unbent,  
Beneath the woodland's kindled gold  
The Dryad and the Oread went ;  
Immortal shapes at dusk would crowd  
The unforsaken mountain-lawn,  
And all the noonday copse was loud  
With Satyr and with Faun.

Long since the pastoral gods are fled  
From haunts that know their face no more ;  
But still a pastoral charm is shed  
On this wan sea and pallid shore,  
And feet of later gods have made  
This Sussex coast more dear to us  
Than Erymanthian forest-glade,  
Or slope of Maenalus.

Ah, fairer where the wild bee goes  
The chill untrodden pasture there ;  
And sweeter than the mystic rose  
That thymy lone sea-scented air,



Though now no Maenad cast her crown,  
And spring to join the mad pursuit,  
Where Pan along the moonlit down  
Goes forth with lyre and flute.

Beneath the blue of modern eyes  
Distilled from southern sky and sea  
The grey of northern seas and skies  
Takes colour, takes divinity ;  
And nymph and demigod must quit  
For upland barn and village green  
The summit where the Muses sit,  
The brink of Hippocrene.

O very daylight of the day,  
Divinest, will you count it good  
If song cease here, content to say  
It fain would praise you, if it could ;  
If one poor scrap of tuneless rhyme  
The least of my remembrance be,  
For this and many another time  
You have been kind to me.

H O P E

I SHALL not see him yet, I know, for still  
Between us lies an unsurmounted hill,  
    And tho' I hurry and pant, his pace is slow ;  
Yet shall I see his sunny face and hair  
(For he will surely come to meet me) there  
    In the last valley somewhere, that I know.

What tho' he pauses in the pleasant wheat  
To watch the lark mount skyward, do my feet  
    Pause or my eyes desert the path they climb ?  
What tho' he strays where pleasant voices call  
Of thrush or dove or woodland waterfall ?  
    My ears hear nothing till that meeting-time.

Will my strength last me ?—did not some one say  
The way was ever easier all the way,  
    The road less rough, the barren waste less bare ?  
The briars are long since past, the stones cut less,  
This hill is not so steep, let me but press  
    Across that peak, I know he will be there.

## CONFESSION OF FAITH

EVEN as a servant's eyes  
    Regard the hand of his master,  
    And the will of his lord is his,  
So my vision descries,  
    Through doubt and change and disaster,  
    One thing fairest that is :

Sole without kindred or name,  
    One, indivisible, holy,  
    Mother and maker of light ;  
Whose face in heaven, as a flame  
    Burning, surely and slowly  
    Kindles day out of night.

Therefore I ask in prayer  
    Him who hath searched and known me  
    This grace only to give :  
When darkness is nighest despair  
    To see uplifted upon me  
    The light of her eyes, and live.

## BEAUTY

THESE other things of earth and sky  
Are still most beautiful, and yet  
I still can love them quietly.

That broad flush where the sun has set  
Lingering awhile for the moon's sake,  
And the grey sea, I shall forget.

Why will forgetfulness not take  
The troubled longing from my heart  
Which thy flushed face and grey eyes make ?

Art thou, thou only, more than part  
Of this great beauty of the whole,  
That but for thee my quick nerves start ?

Hast thou some hidden magic of soul  
Which draws my eyes and hands and feet  
As the moon draws the waves that roll ?

It may be, for I know well, sweet,  
I have no word to say, at best,  
But the waves' word which the winds repeat.

(Moon, is this spell thy potentest?  
Cannot the waves mount up to heaven,  
Or else this tossing sink to rest?)

Conjure no more ; let me be given  
To love thy beauty peacefully  
Like sunshine or the silver Seven.

## SEPARATION

LET us not strive, the world at least is wide ;  
This way and that our different paths divide,  
Perhaps to meet upon the further side.

We must not strive ; friends cannot change to foes ;  
Oh yes, we love ; albeit winter snows  
Cover the flowers, the flowers are there, God knows.

And yet I would it had been any one  
Only not thou, O my companion,  
My guide, mine own familiar friend, mine own !

## SUNT ALIQUID MANES

BEING dead, to desire nothing else than perpetual  
silence around us  
For souls that have passed through many a water  
and fire,  
What happier fortune than this could the gods in  
their goodness have found us,  
Being dead to desire?

This is the end, we said ; no more is left to require ;  
When the light grew dark in our eyes, and the iron  
slumber enwound us ;  
Prone we sank, and the bodily breath in us ceased  
to suspire.

Alas ! for we knew not the ways of the mocking  
hands that had crowned us,  
And granted the half of our prayer in a cruelty  
nothing can tire ;  
That gave us foreknowledge of death, but not of  
the fate that has bound us,  
Being dead, to desire.

## KNOWLEDGE AFTER DEATH

*Siccine separat amara mors ?*

Is death so bitter? Can it shut us fast  
Off from ourselves, that future from this past,  
When Time compels us through those narrow  
doors?

Must we supplanted by ourselves in the course,  
Changelings, become as they who know at last  
A river's secret, never having cast  
One guess, or known one doubt, about its source?

Is it so bitter? Does not knowledge here  
Forget her gradual growth, and how each day  
Seals up the sum of each world-conscious soul?  
So tho' our ghosts forget us, waste no tear;  
We being ourselves would gladly be as they,  
And we being they are still ourselves made whole.



ON THE DEATH  
OF ARNOLD TOYNBEE

(10 MARCH 1883)

GOOD-BYE ; no tears nor cries  
Are fitting here, and long lament were vain.  
Only the last low words be softly said,  
And the last greeting given above the dead ;  
For soul more pure and beautiful our eyes  
Never shall see again.

Alas ! what help is it,  
What consolation in this heavy chance,  
That to the blameless life so soon laid low  
This was the end appointed long ago,  
This the allotted space, the measure fit  
Of endless ordinance ?

Thus were the ancient days  
Made like our own monotonous with grief ;  
From unassuaged lips even thus hath flown  
Perpetually the immemorial moan  
Of those that weeping went on desolate ways,  
Nor found in tears relief.

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Beyond our life how far  
Soars his new life through radiant orb and zone,  
While we in impotency of the night  
Walk dumbly, and the path is hard, and light  
Fails, and for sun and moon the single star  
Honour is left alone.

The star that knows no set,  
But circles ever with a fixed desire,  
Watching Orion's armour all of gold ;  
Watching and wearying not, till pale and cold  
Dawn breaks, and the first shafts of morning fret  
The east with lines of fire.

But on the broad low plain  
When night is clear and windy, with hard frost,  
Such as had once the morning in their eyes,  
Watching and wearying, gaze upon the skies,  
And cannot see that star for their great pain  
Because the sun is lost.

Alas, how all our love  
Is scant at best to fill so ample room !  
Image and influence fall too fast away  
And fading memory cries at dusk of day  
*Deem'st thou the dust recks aught at all thereof,  
The ghost within the tomb ?*

For even o'er lives like his  
The slumberous river washes soft and slow ;  
The lapping water rises wearily,  
Numbing the nerve and will to sleep ; and we  
Before the goal and crown of mysteries  
Fall back, and dare not know.

Only at times we know,  
In gyres convolved and luminous orbits whirled  
The soul beyond her knowing seems to sweep  
Out of the deep, fire-winged, into the deep ;  
As two, who loved each other here below  
Better than all the world,

Yet ever held apart,  
And never knew their own hearts' deepest things,  
After long lapse of periods, wandering far  
Beyond the pathways of the furthest star,  
Into communicable space might dart  
With tremor of thunderous wings ;

Across the void might call  
Each unto each past worlds that raced and ran,  
And flash through galaxies, and clasp and kiss  
In some slant chasm and infinite abyss  
Far in the faint sidereal interval  
Between the Lyre and Swan.

## WINCHESTER

(MALISE CUNNINGHAME-GRAHAM DIED NOV. 26, 1885)

SWEET are the avenues of quiet shade,  
Green cloistered gardens, grey Cathedral wall,  
Unchanged : save in ourselves no change at all  
Here, where we heard life's outpost challenge made  
And lightly answered back, nor felt afraid :  
And sweet to know, whether we stand or fall,  
These things abide in peace perpetual ;  
We lose ourselves, but these are strongly stayed.

For ardour calm, for bright desire and brave  
An early and an endless certitude,  
Here is another, nobler change than ours :  
The lark's song falls on a high-lying grave ;  
Music nor song, nor aught that once seemed good,  
Friendship nor love, may reach below the flowers.

IN MEMORIAM

*Put off thy shoes from off thy feet,*  
So came a voice to thee (tho' shod  
With preparation, to make meet  
For God) from God.

No vision nor similitude  
He showed thee then, but, higher grace,  
His Godhead's self, nor veil-endued,  
But face to face.

Now not by word, O slow of speech,  
Shalt thou the ills of life console,  
Nor tongue to ear thy gospel preach,  
But soul to soul.

( 166 )

W. Y. S.

1890

**WHERE** nineteen summers' festal feet had gone,  
The darkness gathers round thee, laid alone ;  
And there, unchanged, unshadowed, lie with thee  
Kindness and Truth and Magnanimity.

## P R A Y E R S

### I

GOD who created me  
Nimble and light of limb,  
In three elements free,  
To run, to ride, to swim :  
Not when the sense is dim,  
But now from the heart of joy,  
I would remember Him :  
Take the thanks of a boy.

### II

Jesu, King and Lord,  
Whose are my foes to fight,  
Gird me with Thy sword  
Swift and sharp and bright.  
Thee would I serve if I might ;  
And conquer if I can,  
From day-dawn till night,  
Take the strength of a man.



